In the Specification:

Please replace paragraphs 7 and 10 with the following amended paragraphs:

[0007]   Fig. 1 further illustrates an IC package separator 40 comprising a cutting mechanism 42 (shown schematically as a cutting wheel, although other cutting mechanisms, such as, for example, router bits or linear blades, are known to persons of ordinary skill in the art), a retaining table 44, and a control mechanism 45 configured to control orientation of cutting wheel 42 relative to table 44. Retaining table 44 can comprise, for example, an x-y table (*i.e.*, a table horizontally adjustable in x and y directions; an "X", "Y" and "Z" axis system is ~~illustrate~~ <u>illustrated</u> in a lower corner of Fig. 1). Control mechanism 45 can control the x and y orientation of table 44 and the z (i.e., vertical) orientation of cutting mechanism 42 to precisely cut a board retained on table 44. Table 44, cutting mechanism 42, and control mechanism 45 can be comprised by commercially available cutting systems, such as, for example, Advanced Technology Incorporated's CM101 single spindle router (or, more generally, a circuit board depanelization router).

[0010]   After the IC packages are separated from one another, stripper plate 50 is manually lifted off of subplate ~~42~~ <u>48</u> to lift the IC packages 14 from pins 60. Once stripper plate 50 is lifted off from pins 60, the individual IC packages can be separated from stripper plate 50. An exemplary method of removing the IC packages from stripper plate 50 is to tilt plate 50 and allow the packages to slide off plate 50. After the packages 14 are removed, plate 50 can be returned to over 48 and used again for separating IC packages.